

Rhode Island Comprehensive Assessment System (RICAS)

## **RICAS Accessibility and Accommodations Manual, 2018**

RICAS English Language Arts (grades 3 – 8)

RICAS Mathematics (grades 3-8)

**RICAS Assessment Schedule:**

**English Language Arts (all grades):** April 2 – May 4, 2018

**Mathematics (all grades):** April 3 – May 25, 2018



**Rhode Island  
Department  
of Education**

## Purpose of This Manual

Beginning in spring, 2018, Rhode Island will administer the Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS), which Rhode Island will call the Rhode Island Comprehensive Assessment System (RICAS), in English language arts and mathematics in grades 3-8. High school students in Rhode Island will take the PSAT10 or SAT School Day in April, 2018. RICAS, just like PARCC, assesses students' knowledge and skills on the Common Core State Standards. The RICAS assessments are computer-based tests and will be administered using TestNav.

This Accessibility and Accommodations Manual for the spring 2018 RICAS Grades 3–8 Tests provides guidance and information about:

- RICAS participation requirements for students with disabilities, students who are English learners (ELs), and students with disabilities who are ELs
- the availability, selection, and use of
  - *universal accessibility features*, which provide support and accessibility for *all* students;
  - *designated accessibility features* intended for all students, but which require prior authorization from the principal; and
  - *test accommodations* for students with disabilities and students who are English learners (ELs).
- Codes that map the testing supports in this manual to the Personal Needs Profile (PNP).

The appropriate use of accessibility features and accommodations provides all students with increased ability to participate in assessments. Decisions about appropriate test accommodations must be made carefully and be based on the needs of individual students and the requirements outlined in this manual. School and district staff must be trained annually on the use and selection of features and accommodations so they can determine which students are eligible to receive them, and update the selected accessibility features and accommodations for each student in the online Personal Needs Profile (PNP) during the student registration process.

Schools can request guidance from RIDE throughout the year as they plan for the use of test accommodations and other supports for the students who need them. Please contact us at [assessment@ride.ri.gov](mailto:assessment@ride.ri.gov) with any questions.

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# I. Overview of RICAS Accessibility and Accommodations

## A. Introduction

Unless there was significant evidence that an accessibility feature, accommodation, or policy needed to be changed in order to align with Rhode Island initiatives, the Rhode Island Comprehensive Assessment System (RICAS) accessibility features and accommodations remain very similar to those offered on PARCC.

**Note:** It is important to use this document in conjunction with the PNP Field Definitions document so the Personal Needs Profile for each student is uploaded into the PearsonAccess<sup>Next</sup> properly.

**Note:** High school students will not take the RICAS assessments. Accommodations requirements for students taking the PSAT<sup>TM</sup>10 and SAT<sup>®</sup> can be found on the College Board website:

<https://www.collegeboard.org/students-with-disabilities>

## B. Accessibility Features and Accommodations Categories

Accessibility features and accommodations categories are as follows:

- **Universal Accessibility Features (UFs):** Many supports that were previously considered accommodations are now available to *all* students, either on the computer-based tests or on the paper-based equivalent. Universal Accessibility Features may be used by any student.
- **Designated Accessibility Features (DFs):** Flexible test administration procedures may be used with *any* student, at the discretion of the principal (or designee). These include changes in the location of testing rooms, group size, seating of students, and scheduling of test administrations.
- **Accommodations (As):** As before, accommodations will be available to students with disabilities, with several new accommodations now available to English learners. Teams and educators responsible for developing Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) and 504 plans must make decisions regarding accommodations, and these must be listed in the plan of each student. We encourage districts to list accommodations for EL students using the sample form: *Documentation of RICAS Accommodations for an EL Student* in Appendix A, though this is not required.
- **Special Access Accommodations (SAs):** These accommodations will be offered to students who meet certain guidelines and criteria.

The following must be provided to any student who requires them during the testing session, including students with disabilities and EL students:

- **Extended time** (for more on scheduling test sessions, please see the *RICAS Test Coordinator's Manual*)
- **Blank scratch paper** (including blank, lined, or graph paper)
- **Assistance from a test administrator regarding the use of the computer-based testing platform.**
  - **Note:** This only refers to helping a student navigate TestNav. Test administrators are not to help students answer a test question. This also does not remove the responsibility of schools to teach students how to navigate TestNav *prior to testing*. Students should become familiar with the features and basic functionality of the computer-based testing platform (TestNav) by viewing student tutorials and taking online practice tests prior to test administration.

Additional testing policies will be described in the *RICAS Test Coordinator's Manual*, which will be available this winter.

## II. Accessibility Features for All Students

### A. Universal Accessibility Features (UFs)

Universal accessibility features are tools and supports that are available to *all* students on the grades 3–8 RICAS tests that are either built into the computer-based test platform or provided by a test administrator on either the computer- or paper-based tests. Although the majority of universal accessibility features will be available on the day of the test to *any* student who wishes to use them, a small number *must* be requested in advance in the student’s Personal Needs Profile (PNP) in PearsonAccess<sup>Next</sup> (PAN); these have a PNP column designation in the Code column.

**Table 1. Universal Accessibility Features Available to All Students**

Code	Computer-Based Testing	A1: Paper-Based Test (PNP column K)
UF1	<b>Highlight tool</b>	<b>Highlighter</b> (Used in test booklets, not answer booklets, by students in grades 4–8; colored pencils may be used by students in grade 3. See the <i>Test Coordinator’s Manual</i> for details)
UF2 PNP column S	<b>Alternative background and font color</b> ; adjust contrast; use tinted lens(es)  The student can select a predefined color combination for text and background (i.e., black on cream, black on light blue, black on light magenta, white on black, and light blue on dark blue). <b>Must be requested during the student registration process.</b>	Use <b>colored overlays</b> or tinted lens(es)
UF3	<b>Magnifier tool or Zoom tool</b>  Magnifier tool enlarges part of the screen; Zoom tool enlarges or reduces entire screen by pressing Ctrl + or Ctrl -.	<b>Magnification tool</b> or device/low-vision aid
UF4	<b>Line reader tool</b>  Masks text so only part of the text can be viewed at one time	<b>Tracking device</b> , such as a straight edge or similar tool
UF5 PNP column T	<b>Answer masking</b>  Lets students choose which answer choices will show on the screen.	<b>Mask text or answer(s)</b> using a blank card or cutout
UF6	<b>Answer eliminator</b>  Student marks “X” through each answer option they think is incorrect	Use a pencil to eliminate answer choices in test booklet
UF7	<b>Item flag/bookmark</b>	Use a <b>blank place marker</b> to mark a question for later review

UF8	<b>Audio aids</b> (e.g., volume control, amplification device, or white noise machine, provided a smartphone is not used)	<b>Audio aids</b> (e.g., amplification device or white noise machine, provided a smart phone is not used)
UF9	<b>Notepad</b> for notes or calculations	<b>Scratch paper</b> is required to be available for all students (see page 1).
UF10	<p><b>Read aloud selected words on the mathematics tests.</b> Test administrator reads aloud (or signs, in the case of a student who is Deaf or Hard-of-Hearing) selected words on the Mathematics tests, as requested by the student.</p> <p>The student will point to the word or phrase that he or she needs read aloud or signed. Test administrator quietly reads aloud or signs the selected word to the student. Students using this feature may be tested alongside other students in groups of any size.</p>	
UF11	Test administrator <b>redirects student's attention</b> to the test without coaching or assisting the student to answer any questions (e.g., test administrator reminds student to stay focused; it is not permissible to say, "Add more to your response" or "Make sure to answer all questions.")	
UF12	<b>Read aloud, repeat, or clarify general test administration directions to student</b> , as needed.	

## B. Designated Accessibility Features (DFs)

Although most students will be tested in their regular classrooms according to the guidelines and schedule intended for all students, principals have the flexibility to test *any* student, including non-disabled and non-EL students, using the designated accessibility features described in Table 2, as long as all requirements for testing conditions and staffing are met. Designated accessibility features may be provided regardless of whether the student is taking a computer- or paper-based test.

It is advisable, although not required, to include designated accessibility features in the IEP or 504 plan of a student with a disability who requires them.

**Table 2. Designated Accessibility Features available to any student, at the principal's discretion**

#	Designated Accessibility Feature
DF1	<b>Small group</b> test administration (May include up to a total of 10 students.)
DF2	<b>Individual (one-to-one) test administration</b> (Student must be tested in a separate setting.)
DF3	<b>Frequent, brief, supervised breaks</b>
DF4	<b>Separate or alternate test location</b>
DF5	<b>Seating</b> in a specific area of the testing room, including the use of a study carrel
DF6	<b>Adaptive or specialized furniture</b> (seating, desk, or lighting)
DF7	<b>Noise buffer or noise-cancelling earmuffs/headphones</b> may be used only after the test administration instructions have been read to student. Music or other recordings may not be played on headphones worn during testing.
DF8	<b>Familiar test administrator</b>
DF9	<b>Student reads test aloud to self.</b> Student must be tested in a separate setting unless a low-volume device such as a Whisperphone is used.
DF10	<b>Specific time of day</b>
DF11	<b>"Stop Testing" policy:</b> If a student does not appear to be responding to test questions after a period of 15-20 minutes, the test administrator may ask if the student is finished. If so, the test administrator

	<p>may collect the student's test materials and the student can either sit quietly or be excused from the test setting.</p> <p><b>Note:</b> All schools are still held accountable for student participation in state assessments. It is important that every attempt is made to ensure that the student has had sufficient opportunity to show what they know and can do on the test and that the application of this policy is student-centered and not a decision made solely by the test administrator, principal, or other school staff.</p>
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### III. RICAS Participation Requirements for Students with Disabilities

#### A. Background and Purpose

All students, including students with disabilities and ELs, are expected to participate in all RICAS tests scheduled for students in their grade. Students with significant cognitive disabilities who are unable to participate in RICAS, even with accommodations, must take the Dynamic Learning Maps (DLM) alternate assessments in English language arts and mathematics. The information in this manual is intended to guide decision-making by Individualized Education Program (IEP) teams and 504 plan coordinators as to *how*, not *whether*, students with disabilities will participate in RICAS.

#### B. Participation Requirements for Students with Disabilities

State and federal education laws assume that *all* students with disabilities who are educated with Rhode Island public funds are expected to participate in annual statewide assessments, including students enrolled in public schools, charter schools, educational collaboratives, and outplacement schools both within and outside of Rhode Island, as well as students incarcerated at the RI Training School.

Students with disabilities are expected to participate in grade-level tests that correspond with the grade reported to RIDE's Enrollment Census.

Only a student's IEP team can make decisions about which test accommodations are appropriate for the student and whether the student should take a standard or alternate assessment. Assessment decisions for students with disabilities are made on an annual basis for each student and must be listed in the IEP. If the student has a 504 plan, then the 504 plan must also include this accommodation information. The principal is responsible for ensuring that each student is assessed using the test format and accommodations listed in the student's IEP or 504 plan. For more information on the alternate assessments administered in Rhode Island, please visit [www.ride.ri.gov/RIAA](http://www.ride.ri.gov/RIAA).

#### C. English Learners (ELs) with Disabilities

EL students with disabilities are expected to participate in all RICAS assessments required for students in their grade, regardless of the number of years they have been enrolled in U.S. schools, with one exception: EL students who **first enrolled in a U.S. school after April 1, 2017**, are *not required* to take the spring 2018 RICAS or DLM English language arts tests.

EL students with disabilities are entitled to receive test accommodations and to participate in the Rhode Island alternate assessments, Dynamic Learning Maps, as determined by their IEP team or 504 plan. See additional information on the participation of EL students in Section V, *Participation Requirements for Students who are English Learners*, in this manual.



## D. Students with Serious Illness or Medical Emergencies

Guidance on the process for submitting a request for a medical exemption from RICAS assessments can be found in the *Rhode Island Test Coordinator's Handbook* and on the RIDE website at: <http://www.ride.ri.gov/InstructionAssessment/Assessment/AssessmentExemptions.aspx>

## E. Participation Criteria for Alternate Assessments

Guidance on how to make eligibility decisions for the Rhode Island alternate assessments (DLM) can be found in Rhode Island Test Coordinator's Handbook and is posted on the RIDE website at [www.ride.ri.gov/riaa](http://www.ride.ri.gov/riaa) in the document *2017-18 Guidance for IEP Teams*. Be sure that all IEP team members read and review this document before making any final determination on whether or not a student should participate the DLM Alternate Assessments. The following three eligibility criteria must be met before a student can participate in the alternate assessments:

1. **Student has a disability, or disabilities, that significantly impacts cognitive function and adaptive behavior.** Review of student records and other evidence indicate a disability or multiple disabilities that prevent the student from meaningful participation in the standard academic core curriculum or achievement of the standards at their enrolled grade level. Additionally, the student's disability causes dependence on others for many, and sometimes all, daily living needs, and the student is expected to require extensive ongoing support in adulthood.
2. **The student's instruction is aligned to the Common Core State Standards but is adapted to reflect the knowledge and skills in the Core Content Connectors. Instruction in science is aligned to the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) but is modified in terms of the depth and breadth of the content.** Goals and instruction for this student is adapted to reflect the enrolled grade-level CCCs and address knowledge and skills that are appropriate and challenging for this student. Life and job skills are also embedded and included as part of the student's instruction and may provide the context for access to the standards. *Beginning in the 2018-19 school year, all IEPs should use the CCSS, the NGSS, and the Essential Elements to develop goals.*
3. **The student is unable to apply academic, life, and job skills in home, school, and community without intensive, frequent, and individualized instruction and supports in multiple settings.** The student's demonstrated cognitive functioning and adaptive behavior across these settings is significantly below age expectations, even with program modifications, adaptations, and accommodations. This covers the three aspects of learning:
  - a) *What the student needs in order to learn.* In other words, the student **requires** extensive, repeated, individualized instruction and supports from teachers and other professionals.
  - b) *The types of materials required in order for the student to learn.* Materials are significantly modified, customized, and adapted in order to facilitate understanding.
  - c) *How the student demonstrates their learning.* His or her need for substantial supports to achieve gains in the grade-and-age-appropriate curriculum requires substantially adapted materials and customized methods of accessing information in alternative ways to acquire, maintain, generalize, demonstrate, and transfer skills across multiple settings.

## F. Further guidance on making eligibility decisions

The following factors are not appropriate to include in decision-making because they do not add to the IEP Team's understanding of what the student knows and can do. While some of the factors listed below

do make it difficult for a student come to school ready to engage and learn, these issues should be addressed with staff that have appropriate expertise and experience in these areas.

- **Poor attendance or extended absences, for any reason.** Some students have medical conditions that prevent them from attending school regularly enough to receive instruction. While this is recognized as a factor that inhibits a child's exposure to educational experiences and meaningful instruction, it is not evidence of a child's ability or their potential to learn and must be addressed through the appropriate school resources.
- **Poor performance on the general education academic assessments.** Most students receiving special education services can and do participate in general education assessments with accommodations and other supports. Poor performance on these assessments is not an appropriate factor to use when making an eligibility decision. To consider accommodations and supports available on RICAS or other state assessments, please contact Heather Heineke, [heather.heineke@ride.ri.gov](mailto:heather.heineke@ride.ri.gov) or 401-222-8493.
- **English learner (EL) status.** It is important to understand that a student's ability and their knowledge of English are not connected. How well a student understands and speaks English has an impact on his/her ability to learn; however it does not indicate a learning disability. Alternative methods of understanding what a student knows and can do may need to be investigated depending on the student's English proficiency level. Please contact your district EL Director for options. **NOTE:** If the student is also receiving EL services, they must also take the Alternate ACCESS for ELs.
- **Impact of the student's test scores on the accountability score of the school and/or district.** How well or poorly a student may perform on any state assessment is not be used as a deciding factor in determining which assessment is appropriate for a student.
- **Location of special education services in more restrictive settings.** The setting in which a student receives his/her education is not a factor in determining cognitive functioning and adaptive behavior. Districts routinely utilize staff with expertise in the challenges of a specific disability, behavior, or mental health issue, either within the school, district, or in another setting. Regardless of where a student accesses specialized care or services, meaningful academic instruction should always be given to the student. Because of this requirement, the educational placement of a student is not to be used as factor for eligibility.
- **Amount of time receiving special education services.** Students receive special education services in a variety of ways and in varying degrees of intensity. It is more meaningful to consider the type and intensity of the structures and supports the student requires in order to participate academically and socially in their school than it is to consider the amount of hours or days a student requires in order to receive appropriate special education services.
- **Variety of services a student receives.** Many students receive a variety of related services that address their physical, behavioral, or other challenges beyond their cognitive ability. The type of services a student receives does not indicate a significant cognitive disability.
- **Behavior issues, including test anxiety.** Behavior challenges can make learning difficult for some students and should be treated appropriately and professionally. Behavior issues are not always indicators of significant cognitive disabilities; however some disabilities have behavioral indicators. Behavior challenges should not be considered when deciding if a student meets the criteria for an alternate assessment as they are not indicators of cognitive ability.
- **Administrator decision.** Under no circumstances is it appropriate for a school, district, or program administrator to unilaterally make an eligibility decision without the full cooperation

and consensus of the IEP team, of which the parents or guardians are equal participants, or without following all standard procedures regarding educational decision-making for a student.

## **IV. RICAS Accommodations for Students with Disabilities**

### **A. Background and Purpose**

The information in this section is intended to guide decision-making regarding the selection, use, and evaluation of accommodations for RICAS testing. RIDE is providing districts with these guidelines for the provision of appropriate accommodations on the state assessment, and stipulating that **IEP teams and 504 plan coordinators take care to identify and select only those accommodations for each assessment that are needed by the student.** IEP teams should be trained annually on these guidelines. Please read the following information carefully.

### **B. Accommodations for Students with Disabilities**

#### **Purpose of Test Accommodations**

A test accommodation is a change in the way a test is administered or the way in which a student responds to test questions. Test accommodations are intended to accomplish the following:

- offset the effects of the student's disability and remove barriers to participating in the assessment;
- provide the necessary conditions for a student to demonstrate knowledge and skills effectively on the assessments;
- provide the opportunity to report the test results of students who require accommodations;
- provide comparable test results to those of students who did not receive accommodations; and
- provide results that do not affect the validity or reliability of the interpretation of scores for their intended purposes.

The test coordinator and the principal are responsible for ensuring that each student is provided with the test accommodations listed in his or her IEP or 504 plan. Based on the information and guidance found on the following pages, the IEP or 504 plan for each student with a disability must be revised as needed, either during routinely scheduled meetings prior to testing or through the amendment process. The principal is responsible for ensuring that each student is provided with the test accommodations listed in his or her IEP or 504 plan. It is also advisable (though not required) to list the *designated accessibility features* (see Table 2) in the plans of students to ensure these will be provided.

Reliance on test accommodations should never replace appropriate and rigorous instruction based on grade-level standards in the subject being tested.

#### **Eligibility for Test Accommodations**

##### **ELIGIBLE: students with disabilities served by an IEP or 504 plan**

The right of a student with a disability to receive allowable accommodations on RICAS tests is protected by both federal and state laws. The student's IEP or 504 plan must specify precisely which RICAS accommodation(s) he or she will receive. Similarly, a student's 504 plan must already be in place or under development; in cases in which a 504 plan is under development, the school personnel responsible for writing the plan must have already met and agreed upon the necessary RICAS accommodation(s) before a student may be provided them.

**NOT ELIGIBLE: students without documented disabilities and students with documented disabilities who are not served by an IEP or 504 plan.**

A student who does not have a documented disability and is not served by either an IEP or 504 plan is not eligible to receive accommodations on RICAS tests, regardless of whether the student already receives instructional support or accommodations.

### **General Requirements for Use of Test Accommodations**

The use of accommodations is based on the individual needs of a student with a disability and may only be provided when **all** of the following conditions have been met:

- a) The student **has a disability** (non-disabled students may not use test accommodations) that is documented in an IEP or 504 plan and **requires the use of one or more accommodations** to participate in RICAS testing.
- b) The accommodation is listed as an approved accommodation in this manual (or if not, prior written approval has been obtained from RIDE); the **accommodation is listed** on the “State- and District-Wide Assessment” page of the student’s IEP; or is listed as an RICAS accommodation in a 504 plan developed for the student.
- c) The student **uses the accommodation routinely** (with rare exceptions) during classroom instruction and assessment in the subject, both before and after the RICAS test is administered, and is comfortable and familiar with its use. Use of an accommodation during routine instruction does not *necessarily* qualify a student to receive the same accommodation during RICAS testing; for example, the student must meet additional criteria to receive a **special access** accommodation on an RICAS test.
- d) If a **special access accommodation** will be provided, the student meets all of the criteria to receive the accommodation, as shown in Table 5.

IEP teams must reconvene at least annually and determine which accommodations will be needed for state- and district-wide assessments.

Accommodations may **not**:

- alter, explain, simplify, paraphrase, or eliminate any test question, reading passage, writing prompt, or multiple-choice answer option;
- provide verbal or nonverbal clues or suggestions that hint at or give away the correct response to the student;
- contradict test administration requirements or result in a violation of test security; e.g.,
  - modify, reorder, or reformat test questions in any way;
  - require paper-based tests be photocopied, photographed, scanned, altered, or duplicated in any way;
  - require screen shots of computer-based tests be taken;
  - require the use of English-language dictionaries for their administration.

If the above conditions have been met, and the accommodation is listed in the IEP or 504 plan, the accommodation(s) **must be provided** to the student during RICAS testing. If an accommodation is provided that does not meet the conditions stated above, the student’s test score may be **invalidated**.

In the event a student was provided a test accommodation that was not listed in his or her IEP or 504 plan, or if a student was not provided a test accommodation listed in his or her plan, the school should immediately contact RIDE at 401-222-4693. If a student was provided an accommodation that was not in his or her IEP or 504 plan, all or part of the student's score may be invalidated.

### Updating IEPs and 504 Plans

IEPs and 504 plans should be updated for all students with disabilities for the 2018 RICAS test administration to reflect the updated policies and accommodations available. Proper notation of these accommodations will ensure that students receive all the necessary supports to which they are entitled. Including the appropriate designated accessibility features in the plans of students is also encouraged, but not required.

The IEPs and 504 plans of **high school** students taking the PSAT and SAT should refer to the College Board for information on accommodations: <https://www.collegeboard.org/students-with-disabilities>.

### Amending IEPs or 504 Plans

If a student requires an accommodation that is not in their IEP or 504 Plan and there is not enough time to convene a full IEP or 504 Plan team meeting, an amendment process can be followed to ensure that the accommodations section of the IEP or 504 Plan is updated prior to testing. The following is from *The IEP Process: Frequently Asked Questions* (p. 72, [http://www.ride.ri.gov/Portals/0/Uploads/Documents/OSCAS/IEP-FAQ\\_2010-08-19\\_15.pdf](http://www.ride.ri.gov/Portals/0/Uploads/Documents/OSCAS/IEP-FAQ_2010-08-19_15.pdf)).

These changes may be made at an IEP Team meeting with the entire IEP Team present. However, if the parent(s) of the child with a disability and the school district agree, the changes can be made without holding a meeting. In this case a written document would be developed amending the child's current IEP. Individuals are encouraged to refer to his/her district procedures and forms for amending the IEP with or without a meeting. If changes are made to the IEP without a meeting, the district must ensure that the child's IEP Team is informed of the changes.

### If a Student Refuses an Accommodation

If a student refuses to use an accommodation listed in his or her plan, the accommodation must remain available to the student during testing. The school should document in writing that the student refused the accommodation and keep this documentation on file at the school. A sample form for optional use can be found in Appendix B. Students should *not* be asked to sign an agreement waiving their right to receive an accommodation.

If a student refuses an accommodation, and the team believes that the accommodation should be removed from the plan because it is no longer useful to the student, **the plan must be amended** prior to testing, and written consent from the parent/guardian (or student, if applicable) must be obtained.

Similarly, 504 plans must reflect only those accommodations that are required by the student, as determined by one or more educators familiar with the student. Consent by the parent/guardian is *not* required for a new or modified 504 plan, although the parent/guardian must be notified.

### Unique Accommodations Requests

If a student with a disability or an English learner requires an accommodation (e.g., an assistive technology device) that is not listed in Tables 1–6, the school may request approval for use of the unique accommodation, provided the accommodation does **not** accomplish any of the following:

- fundamentally change the test or the construct being measured by the test,

- assist the student to obtain the answers to test questions,
- violate test security requirements.

**Requesting Unique Accommodation Approval:** Requests for approval can be submitted to [assessment@ride.ri.gov](mailto:assessment@ride.ri.gov) or by fax at 401-222-3605 at least two weeks prior to testing. If approved, the accommodation section in the IEP or 504 plan must also be amended.

### Process for Selecting and Evaluating Accommodations for a Students with a Disability

Accommodations are intended to offset the effects of a disability to allow a student to participate effectively in testing. When selecting accommodations, educators should consider the following:

- **Determine the learning challenges** the student is experiencing.
  - Look at the student’s classroom performance, not just the nature or type of disability.
- **Brainstorm the use of various accommodations, universal features, and test administration considerations** with IEP team members and other adults familiar with the student.
  - What supports were used successfully with students who have similar learning profiles?
- **Try out the accommodation(s)** in different assessment settings and make adjustments as needed.
- **Evaluate whether the accommodation addresses the student’s need.**
  - If not, revise the plan to provide accommodation(s) and supports accordingly.
- **If the accommodation addresses the challenge,**
  - determine whether the accommodation is allowed for RICAS testing in the subject,
  - develop or amend the IEP or 504 plan accordingly, listing each accommodation for the specific RICAS test(s).

### Description of RICAS Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

Tables 3–5 list the RICAS accommodations available to students with disabilities on the computer-based test, and where available, the comparable accommodation on the *paper-based* test, grouped into the following categories:

- **Presentation:** allowable changes to the format in which the test is presented;
- **Response:** allowable changes to the procedures, supports, or devices used to facilitate a student’s response to test questions
- **Special Access:** accommodations that allow a small number of students to participate in the test despite a disability that would severely limit or prevent their participation, and which would change the interpretation of the test results.

**Note:** Accommodations with a PNP Column listed in the table must be identified, as applicable, for students in the Personal Needs Profile in PearsonAccess<sup>Next</sup> (PAN).

**Table 3. Test Presentation Accommodations for Students with Disabilities**

**Note:** Accommodations with a *PNP Column* designation must be identified, as applicable, for students in the Personal Needs Profile in PearsonAccess<sup>Next</sup> (PAN).

Test Presentation Accommodations		
Code #	Computer-Based Test	Paper-Based Test: A1 ( <i>PNP column K</i> )
A1 ( <i>PNP column K</i> )	<b>Paper-based edition</b> of the grades 3–8 ELA or Mathematics test may be administered as an accommodation for a student who is unable to use a computer or take the computer-based test due to a disability.	N/A
A2 ( <i>PNP column U</i> )	N/A  (see UF3 for information on screen magnification)	<b>Large print edition</b> (approximately 18-point font size on 11x17-inch paper) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students are not required to use the large-print answer booklet, so IEPs and 504 plans should indicate whether student taking the large-print test also requires a large-print answer booklet. Students who do not require the large-print answer booklet may record their answers in a <b>standard</b> answer booklet.</li> <li>All responses in the large print answer booklet must be transcribed verbatim from the large-print answer booklet to the student's standard answer booklet in order for the student to receive credit for his or her work.</li> <li>Additional large print special instructions will accompany the large print test.</li> </ul>
A3.1 <i>PNP column: V: Screen Reader Edition</i> and A3.2 <i>PNP column: X: Braille Test Edition</i>	<b>A3.1 – Screen reader</b> for a student who is blind or visually impaired <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>If the student will use a screen reader, a separate hard-copy Braille edition test should also be ordered to provide the student with the appropriate Braille graphics.</li> <li>All answers must be entered, either by the student or test administrator, onscreen.</li> </ul>	<b>A3.2 - Braille edition</b> (hard copy) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All answers must be either scribed or transcribed verbatim into the student's answer booklet in order for the student to receive credit for his or her work.</li> <li>Additional Braille special instructions will accompany the Braille test.</li> <li>Rhode Island tests for all grade levels will be provided in Unified English Braille (UEB).</li> </ul>
A4 <i>PNP column: AC: Text-to-Speech</i>	<b>Text-to-speech (TTS)</b> computer-based read-aloud mathematics tests <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>If TTS-enabled version of the computer-based test is read aloud to student using headphones, students may be tested in a typical-size group. If not using headphones, then student must be tested individually in a separate setting.</li> <li><b>NOTE:</b> TTS for ELA (SA1.1) is special access</li> </ul>	N/A

	<p>accommodation for which students must meet specific criteria in order to receive. See Table 5 for guidelines and criteria.</p>	
<p>A5</p> <p><u>PNP column:</u> Y: Human Read Aloud Mathematics</p>	<p><b>Human read-aloud</b> for grades 3–8 Mathematics tests (computer- or paper-based tests)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The test must be read word-for-word, exactly as it appears. The test administrator may not provide assistance to the student regarding the meanings of words, intent of any test item, or responses to test items. The test administrator should read with emphasis only when indicated by bold or italicized text.</li> <li>The test must be administered in a <b>separate setting</b>, either <b>individually</b> or to a <b>small group of 2–5 students</b>, all of whom receive the human read-aloud accommodation. For computer-based testing, students must be placed in a separate Human Read Aloud session in PAN so that they are assigned the same test form and so that the test administrator receives a proctor testing ticket.</li> <li><b>SA1.2: Read aloud for the ELA test</b> is a <i>special access</i> accommodation for which students must meet certain criteria. See Table 5 for guidelines on this accommodation.</li> </ul> <p><b>Note:</b> Read aloud selected words to <i>any</i> student on the mathematics tests is a universal accessibility feature (see Table 1).</p>	
<p>A6</p> <p><u>PNP column:</u> AA: Human Signer</p>	<p><b>Human signer</b> for the Mathematics and ELA test questions only (<i>not reading passages</i>) for a student who is Deaf or Hard-of-Hearing (computer- and paper-based tests):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The test must be signed exactly as it appears. The signer may not provide assistance to the student regarding the meanings of words, the intent of any test item, or in responding to test questions. The signer may finger-spell key words in addition to providing the sign for a term, in cases where a signed term may be unfamiliar to the student. The signer should read with emphasis only when indicated by bold or italicized text.</li> <li>The test must be administered in a <b>separate setting</b>, either <b>individually</b> or to a <b>small group of 2–5 students</b>, all of whom are receiving the human signer accommodation.</li> </ul> <p><b>Notes:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Under secure conditions supervised by the principal, interpreters may review the test materials once they become available, either online or delivered to the school, for the purpose of preparing to sign the test. Test materials may not be removed from the school or accessed online outside of the school. Test administrators and interpreters who review the test prior to testing must sign non-disclosure agreements.</li> <li>If preferred, selected words, phrases, or sections of the Mathematics may be signed to the student, as requested, rather than signing the complete test.</li> <li><b>SA2: Signing the ELA reading passages</b> is a <i>special access</i> accommodation. See Table 5 for guidelines to receive that accommodation.</li> </ul>	
A7	<b>Human signer for test directions only</b> for a student who is Deaf or Hard-of-Hearing	
A8	<b>Track test items</b> (i.e., helping the student move from one test question to the next)	



**Table 4. Response Accommodations for Students with Disabilities**

**Note:** Accommodations with a *PNP Column* designation must be identified, as applicable, for students in the Personal Needs Profile in PearsonAccess<sup>Next</sup> (PAN).

Response Accommodations		
Code	Computer-Based Test	Paper-Based Test ( <i>PNP</i> )
<p>A9</p> <p><i>PNP column:</i> <i>AP: Graphic Organizer/Reference Sheet</i></p>	<p><b>Use a RIDE pre-approved graphic organizer or supplemental reference sheet</b> for grades 3–8 ELA and/or mathematics tests (computer- and paper-based tests)</p> <p><b>Do not submit individualized graphic organizers or reference sheets for ELA and Mathematics to RIDE for approval. Only the pre-approved versions made available by RIDE may be used as an accommodation.</b></p> <p><b>Notes:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Graphic organizers <i>without</i> any text may be used without RIDE approval by a student with a disability who has this accommodation listed in his or her plan.</li> <li>A student may use no more than <b>two</b> different pre-approved graphic organizers or supplemental reference sheets per test session.</li> <li>Graphic organizers may be used throughout the school year during instruction.</li> <li>Pre-approved graphic organizers and reference sheets are available on the RIDE website at <a href="http://www.ride.ri.gov">www.ride.ri.gov</a>.</li> </ul>	
<p>A10.1</p> <p><i>PNP column:</i> <i>AG</i></p> <p>and A10.2</p> <p><i>PNP columns:</i> <i>AI: Speech-to-Text</i> <i>W: Compatible Assistive Technology, if applicable;</i> <i>AJ</i></p>	<p><b>Scribe responses</b> for the Mathematics tests using either a</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>A10.1: human scribe</b> who will record the student’s responses verbatim, either onscreen (computer-based test) or in the student’s answer booklet (paper-based test), as dictated by the student <i>at the time of testing</i>. The student must be tested in a separate setting.</li> </ul> <p>OR</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>A10.2: speech-to-text</b> or other external augmentative communications device (other than a smartphone) to dictate or generate responses, under the direct supervision of a test administrator. The test administrator must transcribe the student’s responses verbatim (either onscreen or in student’s answer booklet) <i>any time prior to the end of the testing window</i>. The student must be tested in a separate setting.</li> </ul> <p>If the student is unable to use his or her writing hand or arm at the time of testing due to a <b>recent fracture, injury, or recovery from surgery</b>, the scribe accommodation can be provided as an Emergency Accommodation. Complete the Emergency Accommodation Form in Appendix D.</p> <p><b>Follow Guidelines for Transcribing Student Responses in Test Coordinator’s Manual.</b></p>	
A11	N/A	<p><b>Responses recorded by student in test booklet</b>, rather than in the answer booklet.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Responses must be transcribed by a test administrator into the student’s answer booklet.</li> <li>If the <b>student transcribes</b> his or her own responses, then transcription must occur <i>during the test session</i> and be completed on the day in which the test session began.</li> </ul> <p><b>Note:</b> this accommodation is typically provided to students in grades 4–8, since grade 3 students use a combined test and answer booklet.</p>

A12 <i>PNP column</i> <i>AK: Typed Responses</i>	N/A	<b>Typed responses</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Responses must be printed out, one response per page, and inserted in the student's answer booklet with all required information on each page (see Appendix C of the <a href="#">Test Coordinator's Manual</a>).</li> <li><b>No transcription is necessary.</b></li> <li>After printing out, responses must be deleted from word processor or device.</li> </ul>
A13 <i>PNP column</i> <i>W: Compatible Assistive Technology</i>	<b>Student records responses on an external recording device</b> (other than a smartphone) while reading the test aloud, then transcribes responses into the answer booklet while playing back recorded segment(s). Responses must be deleted from the device once transcription is completed.	
A14	<b>Responses signed onto video (for a student who is Deaf or Hard-of Hearing)</b> , then transcribed by the student onscreen or into the answer booklet during playback. The video must be deleted after transcription.	
A15	<b>Monitor placement of responses</b> in the appropriate area onscreen or in the answer booklet by the test administrator	
A16	<b>Refreshable Braille Display/Braille note-taker</b> (specific external device used in conjunction with screen reader. A hard-copy edition of the Braille test should also be ordered.)	<b>Braille note-taker</b> (specific external device used in conjunction with hard-copy Braille test)  <b>Note:</b> Braille notes should be returned with the school's nonscorable shipment.
A17	<b>Braille writer</b> (specific external device used in conjunction with screen reader and hard-copy Braille test)	<b>Braille writer</b> (specific external device used in conjunction with the hard-copy Braille test)

**Note regarding transcribing student responses:** The process of transcribing a student's responses onscreen or into his or her answer booklet by a test administrator (e.g., from the large print answer booklet) may occur *anytime* during the testing window, but must be monitored and supervised by the principal, test coordinator, or another test administrator.

### ***Special Access Accommodations for Students with Disabilities***

"Special access" (formerly "nonstandard") accommodations are intended for use by a *very small number of students* who would not otherwise be able to access the test because of a disability that severely limits or prevents them from performing the skill in question. Teams must exercise caution when considering whether a student requires a special access accommodation, since these accommodations may alter part of what the test is designed to measure. Teams must carefully review the criteria described for each special access accommodation listed in Table 5 that follows. Test results for a student who took the test using special access accommodation(s) must be interpreted with caution by parents and schools.

RIDE will review each district's rate of use of special access accommodations. To ensure that IEP teams and 504 plan coordinators carefully review and apply appropriate criteria for use of special access accommodations, districts must do the following:

- train members of IEP teams and 504 plan coordinators on the use of accommodations,

- including “special access” accommodations;
- review all guidelines with staff for special access accommodations listed in Table 5; and
- revise the IEPs and 504 plans of students with disabilities as needed.

**Although test accommodations should generally be consistent with accommodations used for instruction,** the use of a “special access” accommodation listed in Table 5 during instruction does not automatically qualify a student to receive the same accommodation on a RICAS test, **unless the student meets the guidelines described on the following pages.**

IEP and 504 teams are encouraged to make consistent, defensible, and appropriate decisions for each student based on locally administered diagnostic assessments and to amend the IEPs and 504 plans of students who do not meet the criteria listed in Table 5.

**Table 5. *Special Access Accommodations* for Students with Disabilities**

**Note:** Accommodations with a *PNP Column* designation must be identified, as applicable, for students in the Personal Needs Profile in PearsonAccess<sup>Next</sup> (PAN).

Special Access Accommodations	
Code	Computer- and Paper-Based Tests
<p>SA1.1 <i>PNP column AC</i></p> <p>and</p> <p>SA1.2 <i>PNP columns: Z: Human Read Aloud</i></p>	<p><b>Text-to-speech (SA1.1) or Human read-aloud (SA1.2) for the ELA test</b>, including oral presentation of test questions, response options, and passages, using either</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>text-to-speech (embedded in the grades 3–8 computer-based ELA tests), with or without headphones;</li> <li>OR</li> <li>a human reader (for which the test administrator either reads aloud the <b>computer-based test</b> either logged in to a nearby computer or sitting next to the student; or reads aloud the <b>paper-based test</b> to the student, or to a group of up to five students).</li> </ul> <p>This accommodation is intended for a small number of students with documented disabilities that <b>severely limit or prevent them from reading</b>, as documented in locally administered diagnostic evaluations.</p> <p>The student must meet all of the following criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>be <b>virtually unable to read</b>, even after varied and repeated attempts to teach the student to do so (i.e., the student is at the very beginning stages of learning to read, and not simply reading below grade level); and</li> <li>uses this accommodation routinely (except during reading instruction); and</li> <li>receives ongoing intervention to learn the skill.</li> </ul> <p>This accommodation may also be provided to a student who is blind or has a visual impairment and uses a <b>screen reader</b> and/or has not yet learned (or is unable to use) Braille. If the student will use a screen reader, a separate hard copy Braille test edition must be ordered for the student in order to provide the student with the appropriate Braille graphics (see accommodation A3.1).</p> <p>The student</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>may be tested in a typical-sized group if using text-to-speech with headphones;</li> <li>must be tested individually, in a separate setting, if text-to-speech will be used <i>without</i> headphones; and</li> <li>may be tested in a group of no more than 5 students if a human reader is used.</li> </ul> <p><b>Guidelines for Transcribing Student Responses can be found in the Test Coordinator Manual.</b></p>
<p>SA2 <i>PNP column AB: Human Signer</i></p>	<p><b>Human Signer for ELA reading passages</b> for a student who is Deaf or Hard-of-Hearing</p> <p>This accommodation is intended for students who are Deaf or Hard-of-Hearing, and who are <b>severely limited or prevented from reading</b>, as documented in locally-administered diagnostic evaluations.</p> <p>The student must meet all of the following criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>be <b>virtually unable to read</b>, even after varied and repeated attempts to teach the student to do so (i.e., the student is at the very beginning stages of learning to read, and not simply reading below grade level), due to a documented disability and/or history of early and prolonged lack of exposure to and use of language; and</li> <li>uses this accommodation routinely, except during reading instruction; and</li> <li>receives ongoing intervention to learn the skill.</li> </ul>

	Small groups have between five and ten students. Please make sure that all students in a small group have similar accommodations and work at about the same rate.
<p>SA3.1  <u>PNP column:</u>  AH: Human Scribe  ELA  and  SA3.2  <u>PNP columns:</u>  AJ: Speech-to-Text  W: Compatible  Assistive  Technology, if  applicable</p>	<p><b>Scribe responses on the ELA test</b>, using either:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a <b>human scribe</b> (SA3.1) records student’s responses verbatim during testing into TestNav directly or the student’s answer booklet. OR</li> <li>• <b>speech-to-text</b> (SA3.2) or other external augmentative communications device (other than a smartphone) used by student to dictate or generate responses, under the direct supervision of a test administrator. The test administrator must transcribe the student’s responses verbatim (either onscreen or in the student’s answer booklet) at any time <i>prior to the end of the testing window</i>.</li> </ul> <p>This accommodation is intended for a student who either:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. has a <b>language-processing disability</b> and requires the dictation of virtually all written responses to a scribe or an electronic speech-to-text conversion device to generate responses. OR</li> <li>2. who is unable to use his or her writing hand or arm at the time of testing due to a <b>fracture, severe injury, or recovery from surgery</b>. In this case, the accommodation can be administered as an Emergency Accommodation. Please complete the Emergency Accommodation Form in Appendix D.</li> </ol> <p>Clarification on the <b>role of a scribe</b> for the ELA test:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The test must be administered individually in a separate setting.</li> <li>• The scribe may enter student responses either onscreen (computer-based test) or in the student’s answer booklet (paper-based test) at the time of testing.</li> <li>• The scribe must write exactly what the student dictates. The scribe may not edit or alter the student’s dictation in any way. When scribing, the scribe may assume that each sentence begins with a capital letter and ends with a period. All other capitalization, punctuation, and paragraph breaks are the responsibility of the student.</li> <li>• After the student has finished dictating his or her response(s), the scribe must ask the student to do the following: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Spell key words, including proper nouns, multi-syllable words, and other words relevant to the topic.</li> <li>b. Review the draft composition and make any necessary edits, including edits to capital letters, punctuation, and paragraph breaks. The student may make edits independently or may direct the scribe to make the edits. The scribe must not assist the student in making decisions during the editing process.</li> </ol> </li> </ul>
<p>SA4  <u>PNP column:</u>  AL: Calculation  Device on non-  calculator test  session(s)</p>	<p><b>Calculation device or other mathematics tool</b> (e.g., addition/subtraction or multiplication/division tables; or manipulatives) on the <i>non-calculator session</i> of the Mathematics test.</p> <p>This accommodation is intended for a small number of students with documented disabilities that <b>severely limit or prevent them from performing basic calculations</b> without a calculation device or other mathematics tool, as documented in locally-administered diagnostic evaluations, even after varied and repeated attempts to teach the student to do so.</p> <p>The student must meet all of the following criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• be <b>virtually unable to calculate</b> (i.e., unable to perform single-digit addition, subtraction, multiplication, or division without a calculation device or other mathematics tool); and</li> <li>• uses the calculation device or tool during routine instruction in mathematics; and</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>receives ongoing intervention to learn the skill.</li> </ul> <p>The student's IEP or 504 plan must specify which calculation device or tool will be used.</p> <p>Manipulatives and other mathematics tools (excluding calculators and arithmetic tables) must be approved by RIDE prior to their use on RICAS tests. Please contact RIDE at <a href="mailto:assessment@ride.ri.gov">assessment@ride.ri.gov</a> with questions on manipulatives. Use the <b>Unique Accommodation Form</b> in the back of this manual to request approval.</p> <p><b>Note:</b> Calculators are allowed for <i>all</i> students on designated calculator sessions of the computer-based Mathematics test. Schools must provide a calculator to students receiving this accommodation for the non-calculator session.</p>
<p>SA5</p> <p><i>PNP column: AM: Spell - Checker</i></p>	<p><b>Spell-checker for the ELA test</b>, including an external spell-checking device for the paper-based test; or in conjunction with the typed response accommodation for the paper-based test</p> <p>This accommodation is intended for a small number of students with disabilities that <b>severely limit or prevent them from spelling correctly</b>, even after varied and repeated attempts to teach the student to do so.</p> <p>The student must meet all of the following criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>be <b>virtually unable to spell simple words</b> (i.e., at the beginning stages of learning how to spell), as documented in locally-administered diagnostic evaluations; and</li> <li>produces understandable written work only when provided this accommodation, which the student uses during routine instruction; and</li> <li>receives ongoing intervention to learn the skill.</li> </ul> <p>The student may not use grammar check or access the internet.</p>
<p>SA6</p> <p><i>PNP columns: W: Compatible Assistive Technology and AN: Word Prediction</i></p>	<p><b>Word prediction for the ELA test</b>, using an external device, application, or software compatible with the computer based test platform</p> <p>(A list of assistive technology devices compatibility with TestNav (i.e. the computer-based test) will be available on PearsonAccess<sup>Next</sup> )</p> <p>Word prediction external device provides a bank of frequently or recently used words after the student keyboards the first few letters of a word.</p> <p>This accommodation is intended for a small number of students who:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>have a disability or disabilities that <b>severely limit or prevent them from recalling and processing language</b> to write or keyboard written responses without the use of a word prediction device, application, or software; AND</li> <li>can access written expression only through the use of word prediction software that they use routinely to generate written responses.</li> </ol> <p>A test administrator should facilitate the transfer of information from the external device or application to the answer booklet or onscreen. Written responses must either be transcribed by the student at the time of testing or be transcribed by an adult prior to the end of the testing window.</p> <p>During testing, internet access must be turned off/restricted; and the “predict-ahead” and “predict online” functions must be turned off, since these functions automatically select words for the student.</p>

## V. Participation Requirements for Students Who Are English Learners (ELs)

EL students must participate in all RICAS tests scheduled for their grades, regardless of the language program and services they are receiving or the amount of time they have been in the United States.

The one exception applies to first-year EL students who enrolled in U.S. schools **after April 1, 2017** for whom ELA testing is *not required*. **First-year EL students *must* participate in RICAS or DLM Mathematics tests.** Results will be reported for diagnostic purposes only; students' results will not be included in school and district accountability reporting.

### EL Participation Requirements for 2018, Grades 3–8 RICAS Tests

	ELA Test	Mathematics Test	Science Test
<b>First-Year EL Students</b>	<i>Not Required</i>	Required	Required
<b>All Other Students</b>	Required	Required	Required

For questions and information regarding the **identification screening, placement, and reclassification of EL students**, contact Emily Klein, RIDE Office of Student, Community, and Academic Supports (OSCAS) at 401-222-8985 or [Emily.klein@ride.ri.gov](mailto:Emily.klein@ride.ri.gov) or at: [ride.ri.gov/StudentsFamilies/EnglishLearnerPrograms/ELPrograms.aspx](http://ride.ri.gov/StudentsFamilies/EnglishLearnerPrograms/ELPrograms.aspx).

## VI. RICAS Accessibility and Accommodations for EL Students

In addition to the universal and designated accessibility features listed elsewhere in this manual that are available to ELs (as well as all students), several additional accommodations are also available to ELs. Table 6 describes which accommodations may be used by ELs, while Table 7 describes the relative suitability of each accommodation for students at beginning, intermediate, and advanced levels of English proficiency.

### A. Individuals Involved in Selecting Accessibility Features and Accommodations for EL Students

Decisions about universal and designated features and accommodations for EL students should be made by an informal group of educators familiar with the student; the group will identify the appropriate features and accommodations for each EL student. The decisions of the informal decision-making team should be documented using either the sample form provided in Appendix A, or using a similar, locally designed form.

Individuals involved in the decision-making process may include any of the following:

- the student him- or herself
- the student's English as a Second Language (ESL) educator
- school administrator (principal/assistant principal)
- general educator (content area teacher)
- special educator (if appropriate)
- parent or guardian

Decision-making teams are encouraged to determine and assign features and accommodations to EL students as early as possible in the school year to ensure that the student is familiar with their use. The student should not be introduced to an accessibility feature or accommodation on the day of the assessment. Appropriate features and accommodations are intended to allow EL students to demonstrate their knowledge and skills more effectively.

## **B. Guidelines for Selecting Accessibility Features and Accommodations for EL Students**

Because a student's level of English language proficiency is transitional, and the student's linguistic needs will differ from one year to the next, universal and designated accessibility features and accommodations should be examined and revised annually as the EL student makes progress toward English proficiency.

### **Decision-Making Procedures**

The following procedures can be used to make appropriate decisions regarding selection of features and accommodations for EL students:

1. While examining the range of supports allowed on RICAS tests that may help the EL student access the curriculum and take assessments more effectively, the student's classroom teacher should ask him- or herself the following question:
  - *Has a particular feature and/or accommodation been used successfully in the past to assist students in similar situations and at similar English proficiency levels?*
2. While trying out the selected supports during routine instruction to determine whether they meet the student's needs, the teacher should ask him- or herself the following questions:
  - *Does the feature and/or accommodation help the student overcome the barrier posed by his or her developing English language proficiency?*
  - *Is the student comfortable using the feature or accommodation?*
3. The teacher should observe the student in the classroom (or if possible, across different classrooms and school settings) using the feature or accommodation and inform members of the decision-making team which features or accommodations seem most appropriate and effective.

Based on the feature(s) and/or accommodations listed in this manual and used successfully in the classroom, the teacher can select the appropriate features and/or accommodations for use on the RICAS tests.

4. The teacher should document the final decisions either on the sample form provided in Appendix A, or use a similar locally designed form, and keep this form in the student's file.

### **Involving EL Students in Selecting and Using Accommodations**

The more that an EL student is involved in the accommodation selection process, the more likely the accommodations will be accepted and used by the student. Also, as students' English proficiency increases, and especially as students reach adolescence and the desire to be more independent increases, students will help to determine when the support is no longer useful. Students are likely to increase their self-advocacy abilities over time to ensure that the selected supports are provided during testing. Teachers and other adults can play a role in assisting students to advocate on their own behalf regarding their need for and use of accessibility features and accommodations.

It is important to introduce the use of selected features and accommodations as early as possible before the RICAS tests are administered to familiarize students with their use and determine their effectiveness. Accommodations should not be provided for the first time during an assessment.

### **Evaluating the Effectiveness of Features and Accommodations**

Accessibility features and accommodations should be evaluated over time for their effectiveness. Observations conducted during test administration, interviews with test administrators, and talking



with students after testing is likely to yield data that can be useful in guiding the evaluation of the use of features and accommodations at the school, district, and student levels.

The following questions can guide decision-making regarding the effectiveness of the selected accessibility features and accommodations.

- Was the student familiar with the feature or accommodation prior to testing?
- Does the student use the feature or accommodation routinely?
- Was the student comfortable using the feature or accommodation?
- Does the student's performance on the assessment improve when the feature or accommodation is used?

## C. Accommodations for Students Who Are English Learners (ELs)

In addition to universal features and designated features available to all students, the following accommodations are available to ELs, either with or without disabilities, on RICAS tests.

**Table 6. Accommodations for Students Who Are ELs**

Code	Accommodations for EL Students
EL6 <i>PNP column:</i> <i>AR: Spanish Edition Mathematics</i>	<p><b>Spanish Edition</b> of the grades 3–8 Mathematics tests may be administered to any EL student with a low level of English proficiency, is currently receiving or has received mathematics instruction in Spanish, or who has little or no familiarity with technology. Spanish versions of the mathematics tests do not have English versions of the test items.</p> <p><b>Note:</b> Administering the ELA test to a first-year EL student is <i>not required</i>. The RICAS English Language Arts assessments are not available in Spanish.</p>
EL7 <i>PNP column:</i> <i>AR: Spanish Edition Mathematics</i>	<p><b>Paper-based edition in Spanish</b> of the grades 3–8 Mathematics tests may be administered to any EL student with a low level of English proficiency, is currently receiving or has received mathematics instruction in Spanish, or who has little or no familiarity with technology. Spanish versions of the mathematics tests do not have English versions of the test items; the test booklets are not bilingual.</p> <p><b>Note:</b> Administering the ELA test to a first-year EL student is <i>not required</i>. The RICAS English Language Arts assessments are not available in Spanish.</p>
EL8 <i>PNP columns:</i> <i>AR: Spanish Edition Mathematics</i> <i>U: Large Print Test Edition</i>	<p><b>Large Print paper-based edition in Spanish</b> of the grades 3–8 Mathematics (approximately 18-point font size on 11x17-inch paper) tests may be administered to any EL student with a low level of English proficiency, is currently receiving or has received mathematics instruction in Spanish, has a visual impairment, or who has little or no familiarity with technology.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students are not required to use the large-print answer booklet, so IEPs and 504 plans should indicate whether student taking the large-print test also requires a large-print answer booklet. Students who do not require the large-print answer booklet may record their answers in a <b>standard</b> answer booklet.</li> <li>All responses in the large print answer booklet must be transcribed verbatim from the large-print answer booklet to the student’s standard answer booklet in order for the student to receive credit for his or her work.</li> <li>Additional large print special instructions will accompany the large print test.</li> <li>Students may respond in either Spanish or English</li> <li>Spanish mathematics tests do not have English versions of the test items; the test booklets are not bilingual.</li> </ul> <p><b>Note:</b> Administering the ELA test to a first-year EL student is <i>not required</i>. The RICAS English Language Arts assessments are not available in Spanish.</p>
EL2 <i>PNP columns:</i> <i>AS: Bilingual Dictionary</i>	<p><b>Approved Bilingual Word-to-Word Dictionary and Glossary</b> (English/Native language)</p> <p>Bilingual dictionary use for RICAS tests is strictly limited to those that provide word-to-word translations. Dictionaries that include definitions, synonyms, antonyms, phrases, and other information are prohibited. Electronic dictionaries are not allowed.</p> <p>A list of authorized bilingual dictionaries and glossaries is available on RIDE’s website at <a href="http://www.ride.ri.gov/ricas">www.ride.ri.gov/ricas</a>. To discuss the approval of a word-to-word dictionary not included in the list, please contact the RIDE Assessment Office at <a href="mailto:assessment@ride.ri.gov">assessment@ride.ri.gov</a>.</p> <p><b>Note:</b> This accommodation is also available to former ELs.</p>

<p>EL3.1 <i>PNP column AC</i></p> <p>and</p> <p>EL3.2 <i>PNP column Y</i></p>	<p><b>Text-to-speech (TTS) (EL3.1) for Mathematics tests only; or Human read-aloud (EL 3.2) for Mathematics tests in English</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If administering the paper-based test with a human reader, the test must be read word for word in English, exactly as written. The test administrator may not provide assistance to the student regarding the translation or meaning of words. The test administrator should read with emphasis only when indicated by bold or italicized text.</li> <li>• If a human reader is used, the test must be administered in a separate setting either <b>individually</b> or to a <b>group of 2–5 students</b> all of whom are receiving the human reader accommodation.</li> <li>• If the TTS-enabled English-only edition of the computer-based test is read aloud to a student using headphones, students may be tested in a typical-size group. If not using headphones, then student must be tested in a separate setting.</li> </ul> <p><b>Note:</b> Reading aloud <b>selected words</b> on the Mathematics tests is a universal accessibility feature (UF10). See Table 1.</p>
<p>EL3.3 <i>PNP column: Y: Human Read Aloud</i></p>	<p><b>Human read-aloud in Spanish for Mathematics tests only</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The entire test must be read word for word in Spanish, exactly as written. The test administrator may not provide assistance to the student regarding the translation or meaning of words. The test administrator should read with emphasis only when indicated by bold or italicized text.</li> </ul> <p><b>Note:</b> TTS in Spanish audio for the computer version is not available on RICAS. If a student requires a read aloud in Spanish, that accommodation must be provided by someone who is fluent in speaking, reading, and writing Spanish.</p> <p><b>Note:</b> Spanish versions of the mathematics tests do not have English versions of the test items; the test booklets are not bilingual.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The test must be administered in a separate setting either <b>individually</b> or to a <b>group of 2–5 students</b> all of whom are receiving the human reader in Spanish accommodation.</li> <li>• The person reading the test must be fluent in reading, writing, and speaking Spanish.</li> </ul> <p><b>Note:</b> Reading aloud <b>selected words</b> on the Mathematics tests is a universal accessibility feature (UF10). See Table 1.</p>
<p>EL4.1 and EL4.2 <i>PNP column: AG: Human Scribe</i></p>	<p><b>Scribe</b> for the Mathematics tests only, using either</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>EL4.1:</b> a <b>human scribe</b> records student’s responses verbatim <i>at the time of testing</i>; or</li> <li>• <b>EL4.2:</b> student <b>dictates responses using speech-to-text or other external communication device, with subsequent transcription by an adult</b>, either onscreen or in the student’s answer booklet.</li> </ul>
<p>EL5</p>	<p><b>Read aloud/repeat/clarify general administration directions in student’s native language, including Spanish.</b></p> <p>(if native language-speaker is available)</p> <p><b>Note:</b> Spanish translation of the directions are included in the Spanish Mathematics kit <i>Test Administration Manual</i>.</p>

Table 7 provides guidance regarding the suitability of EL accommodations based on the English language proficiency (ELP) level of the student.

**Table 7. Guidance on Selecting Accommodations for English Learners**

KEY for Table 7:				
<p>● <b>Highly recommended</b> for use by English learners at this ELP level</p> <p>⊙ <b>Recommended</b> for use by English learners at this ELP level</p> <p>○ <b>May not be appropriate</b> for students at this ELP level</p>				
#	Accommodation	Most Likely to Benefit English Learners at the Following English Proficiency Levels		
		Beginning	Intermediate	Advanced
EL2	Approved bilingual word-to-word dictionary and glossary (English/Native Language)	○	●	●
EL3	Text-to-speech or Human read-aloud for the Mathematics tests in English	●	⊙	○
EL4	Human scribe or speech-to-text for Mathematics	●	⊙	○
EL5	Read aloud/repeat/clarify general administration directions in English (by test administrator)	●	⊙	○
EL6	Read aloud/repeat/clarify general administration directions in student's native language (by test administrator)	●	⊙	○

## APPENDIX A: Documentation of Accommodations for an EL Student

*Sample Form (Optional)*

Use this form to document the selection of **RICAS accessibility features and accommodations** for each EL student. Available accessibility features and accommodations are listed in the *Accessibility and Accommodations Manual for the Spring 2017 Grades 3–8 RICAS Tests*. This form should be completed within 60 days of the start of school year or student’s date of enrollment, and must be **updated annually**. Accommodations decisions for EL students with disabilities must also be documented in the student’s IEP or 504 plan.

**Student Name:** \_\_\_\_\_ **School Year:** \_\_\_\_\_

Grade: \_\_\_\_\_ SASID: \_\_\_\_\_

School: \_\_\_\_\_ District: \_\_\_\_\_

**Name of staff and others who determined the test accommodations and features for the student:**

Teacher(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Others (including student and/or parent) \_\_\_\_\_

If the **parent** and/or **student** were not part of the decision-making process, then they should be notified of the features and accommodations the student will receive on the tests.

**Directions:** Indicate the **accessibility features and accommodations** that will be provided to the student on RICAS tests:

Accessibility Feature or Accommodation Needed by the EL Student for Testing	Notes/Comments
<p>(Continue on additional pages as needed.)</p>	

## APPENDIX B: Student Accommodation Refusal Form

### *Sample Form (Optional)*

If a student refuses an accommodation listed in his or her IEP or 504 plan, the school should document in writing that the student refused the accommodation, and the accommodation must be offered and remain available to the student during testing.

This form can be completed and placed in the student's file, and a copy sent to the parent. IEP teams, 504 plan coordinators, and educators making RICAS accommodations decisions for ELs should consider this information when making future accommodations decisions for the student. Use of this form is encouraged, but not required.

<b>Student Name:</b> _____	<b>Date:</b> _____
<b>Grade:</b> _____	<b>SASID:</b> _____
<b>School:</b> _____	
<b>District:</b> _____	
<b>RICAS Test:</b> _____	
<b>Test Administrator:</b> _____	
<b>Accommodation(s) refused by student</b> _____	
_____	
<b>Reason for refusal:</b> _____	
_____	
_____	
<b>Comments:</b> _____	
_____	
_____	

Keep this form on file at the school. Do *not* submit this form with your school's test materials.

## APPENDIX C: Unique Accommodation Form

**Directions:** To request approval for a unique accommodation, this form must be submitted to **RIDE by fax to 401-222-3605** by the principal or designee or District Testing Coordinator or designee, at least six weeks prior to testing to ensure a timely response from RIDE. **DO NOT EMAIL.** A Word version of this form can be found at [www.ride.ri.gov/RICAS](http://www.ride.ri.gov/RICAS)

<b>DISTRICT/SCHOOL ASSURANCES:</b> In submitting this form for approval, the principal/designee or assessment coordinator assures that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This accommodation will be documented in the student's IEP, 504 Plan, or EL plan. In the case of an IEP, the parent/guardian of the student must sign the amended IEP prior to testing.</li> <li>• The school team has met and considered all listed accommodations before proposing this unique accommodation.</li> </ul> <p>The proposed accommodation is used, as appropriate, for routine classroom instruction and assessment.</p>	
District Name:	DATE:
Name of Principal/Designee or District/LEA Testing Coordinator (please print):	
School Name:	
Telephone Number:	Fax Number:
<b>Student Information:</b>	
Student Name:	SASID:
Grade:	DOB:
<b>Information on the Accommodation:</b>	
Test(s) on which the student will use the accommodation? <input type="checkbox"/> ELA <input type="checkbox"/> Mathematics	
Describe the accommodation in detail:	
How is this accommodation used during instruction, classroom assessments, or on other assessments:	
What equipment, staff, space, or additional accommodations will also be needed in order to administer this accommodation?	
<b>FOR RIDE USE ONLY:</b> <input type="checkbox"/> This accommodation is APPROVED <input type="checkbox"/> This accommodation is DENIED RIDE Staff Name and Position: _____ Signature: _____ Date: _____ NOTES:	

## APPENDIX D: Emergency Accommodation Form

**Directions:** This form is appropriate in cases where a student needs a new accommodation immediately prior to the assessment due to unforeseen circumstances. Cases could include students who have a recently-fractured limb (e.g., fingers, hand, arm, wrist, or shoulder); whose only pair of eyeglasses has broken; or a student returning from a serious or prolonged illness or injury. If the principal (or designee) determines that a student requires an emergency accommodation on the date of the test, this form must be completed and maintained in the student's assessment file. The parent must be notified that an emergency accommodation was provided. This form must be submitted to the district testing coordinator to be retained in the student's file. Do not submit this form to RIDE.

District/LEA Name:	Date:
School Name:	Telephone Number:
Student Name:	Grade:
SASID:	DOB:

Which accommodation(s) will be used?

Reason for needing an emergency test accommodation:

Who will administer the accommodation?

_____	_____
Staff Member's Name (please print)	Title/Position
_____	_____
Principal's Signature	Date